

BRIDGWATER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING

**HELD ON THURSDAY 27 OCTOBER 2016 AT 7.30PM
AT THE CHARTER HALL TOWN HALL BRIDGWATER**

PRESENT: Cllr GJ Granter (Deputy Mayor - in the Chair), Cllrs M Cresswell, P Johnstone, Ms L Leavy, M Lerry, DP Loveridge, AJ Moore, Ms K Pearce, L Redman, and BD Smedley,

Apologies: Cllr Glassford (Mayor of Bridgwater) and Cllrs Ms Brown, Mrs Morley, Rodrigues, Turner and Ms Wilson

44/16 EDF/HPC TRANSPORT FORUM (20/10/16):

Report and update on North Bridgwater junction improvements: presentation by EDF (and SCC Highways):

The Deputy Mayor introduced Mr David Eccles and from Skanska Mr Ed Hartley and Mr Phil Fricker with a presentation on the proposals for initial works on two junctions at the Golden Triangle. After examination and modeling of various alternatives, this was planned to be based on a one-way system, south along Bristol Road, along The Drove (2 way) and via Wylds Road. Mr Eccles outlined the process so far, the consultation which had been undertaken and which was going forward. Given the importance of these junctions and the need to maintain traffic flows, following the presentation to the Transport Forum, it had been agreed to present directly to the Town Council. Mr Eccles emphasised this was in the early stages of consultation and still open to tweaking but the modeling had shown this was the preferred option to maintain traffic flows. Members raised a series of detailed questions and highlighted a number of issues which they felt should be addressed, and in particular raised the length of the right turn into the Drove from Bristol Road, the closure of the exit from East Quay into the Wylds Road junction, and the absence of a right turn facility at the junction of Wylds Road and Bristol Road (the Matalan junction). Andy Coupe from SCC confirmed that there would be an extra person in traffic control at the County as well as manual control of traffic lights through the construction works. The proposals reduced the length of the programme to an estimated 29 weeks. Members were concerned about the impact on businesses and residents, considering that compensation should be available for those who may be severely constrained. Mr Eccles confirmed that there was no provision for compensation for individual businesses but that, as was widely known, Community Impact Mitigation funds were available with pots of money earmarked.

At this point in the proceedings the Deputy Mayor adjourned the meeting to enable members of the public to raise questions. Issues raised were responded to and some points taken away for further consideration.

Copies of the presentation, updated, would be provided for circulation. Answers to specific questions including, number of HGVs which would regularly use junctions 23 and 24 or be diverted to reduce pressure from J23, and the number of HGVs which could be accommodated in the extended right turn lane into The Drove would also be provided. Sergeant Edwards confirmed that, from the police perspective, they would review the plans in conjunction with the Hinkley Team, who would also be part of the review and control mechanism for the period of the works.

RESOLVED:

1. That the presentation and information provided and responses to questions be noted;
2. that this Council demands that EDF put in place and detail an extensive consultation process for businesses and residents straight away and throughout any works to allow constant updates for the duration of the project; and
3. that EDF put in place a process that allows businesses to be compensated if they can demonstrate adverse financial effects during the proposed works.

45/16 PUBLIC SPEAKING (ADJOURNMENT):

Mr Gilbert Penwell, owner of the Sweet Box at The Cornhill, Bridgwater, registered his concerns about anti-social behaviour from a number of youngsters who were regularly congregating on The Cornhill from 3.30 through to 7.00 o'clock at night and which was affecting trade, particularly his own and the Prezzo restaurant. He highlighted a number of problems which this brought, notwithstanding CCTV coverage and Police/PCSO attendance. These issues were noted and were picked up in the following police report.

Mrs Sally Jones also spoke raising concerns about bus services and the prospect of cuts in services affecting particularly elderly people and the use of routes C and F. She explained that the Slinky and Community Transport Services were no substitute given the costs involved.

Cllr Smedley reported on the recent Transport Forum discussions, the issues raised and the actions being taken. It was essential in the view of the Town Council to manage reductions in services and pressure was being applied on the County Council to find a way through the problems arising through likely reduced funding in 2017. The Town Council confirmed their opposition to the cuts and confirmed the actions being taken to manage the situation.

46/16 POLICING IN BRIDGWATER (Min 32/16):

Sergeant Ryan Edwards gave a brief resume of police activity in and around the Town and introduced Acting Sergeant Joe Piscina who would be managing the Town Centre Team. Sergeant Edwards responded to the issues raised by Mr Penwell, the actions being taken to respond and the interaction with CCTV and the logging of complaints through 101 and the anti-social behaviour hot-line.

He also gave an update on Operation Ash and successes achieved in combating drugs. Begging remained a problem but the town force was working closely with, for example Weston-super-Mare, in following best practice to manage these problems.

Sergeant Edwards also confirmed actions planned in terms of Carnival, Rag Day and Halloween with new publicity issued through Neighbourhood Watch.

He was pleased to advise that the Police and Crime Commissioner had placed neighbourhood policing high in the list of new priorities for the coming period, and this was much in response to issues raised by organisations such as the Town Council. Multi-agency meetings continued to deal with matters affecting Blake Gardens and the Town Centre and Cllr Smedley highlighted issues which had recently become apparent on that part of Blake Gardens east of Broadway. Sergeant Edwards undertook to follow this through.

The Council again endorsed their thanks to Sergeant Edwards for his support and wished him well in his new location.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk take forward these particular issues into the forthcoming multi-agency meeting in relation to Blake Gardens, the Town Centre and Cornhill, and continue to press for regular police presence in and around the Town.

47/16 MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 15/09/16:

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 15/09/16 be approved and signed by the Deputy Mayor as a correct record.

48/16 2017/18 LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE SETTLEMENT - TECHNICAL CONSULTATION PAPER:

The Town Clerk reported that the consultation included proposals to extend Council Tax Referendum principles to local Parish and Town Councils. He explained the impact of such a proposal, which would be especially damaging to the ability of local Councils to meet the needs of their communities.

RESOLVED: That the Town Council support opposition to the proposal and submit views accordingly.

49/16 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND RECEIPTS:

RESOLVED: That the payments including Section 137 payments made during September (month 6) itemising payments and receipts, be approved and confirmed, and specific income received during the periods together with the Cost Centre Reports and bank reconciliations and investments be noted.

50/16 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES (15/09/16):

i. Forward Plan 2016/17 (Tracker) (Min 40/16i) - Relevant items were referred elsewhere on the agenda noting items to be picked up in the coming months.

ii. Bridgwater Community Hospital (Min 40/16iv) - The Town Clerk and Cllr Ms Pearce reported on the reply from the Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. They recommended a way forward whereby further information about discharges, and the commissioning of care packages would be taken up with the Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group. This was agreed.

iii. Report of Finance Committee (Min 37/16) - Minutes of the 14/09/16 which had been the subject of oral report at the previous meeting were circulated for information. The Town Clerk confirmed the programme of meetings through November, December and January which would deal with the budget and precept for 2017/18.

iv. Report of Local Transport Forum (Min 38/16) - The Minutes of the meeting held on 13/09/16 which had been the subject of oral report to the previous meeting were circulated for information. Members were advised of the issues which were being pursued with Somerset County Council and County Cllr David Fothergill, and issues directed at bus services including emergency bus funding. Berry's Coaches had requested attendance and this was welcomed.

v. Bridgwater Tidal Barrier Scheme (Min 42/16) - Members noted the conclusion of the consultation at the end of Oct 2016 and the programme. The Town Council's position had been agreed at the previous meeting and advised in response.

51/16 AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS 2015/16:

The Town Clerk reported notice of conclusion of the Audit which had now been published on the website in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

The Town Clerk confirmed the satisfactory completion of the Audit, but drew attention to other matters raised by the Auditors which did not affect the final opinion.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

52/16 PUBLICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE:

The Town Clerk reported on correspondence and papers received, those for decision and those for information.

RESOLVED: That all items be noted as listed in the Report dated 20/10/16 (agenda item 9), and decisions taken as follows:

Decisions:

1. Town Hall Old Council Chamber Refurbishment - continuing programme - Installation of the St Mary's pews, chandeliers and LED lighting strips had been completed. A quotation had been obtained for the repositioning of the intruder alarms - **Resolved:** That the quotation from ADT in the sum of £1,640.16 including VAT be approved and authorised.
2. Snowflakes and Shopping, and Christmas Lights Switch-On - **Resolved:** That the meeting of the Bridgwater Town Team on 29/09/16 be noted and the plans put in place for the installation of the Christmas Tree and arrangements for the Christmas lights switch-on be agreed.
3. Bridgwater Buoy - The Town Clerk confirmed that this was moving forward with a return date later in November, and receipt of the Planning Consent for the relocation of the Buoy and the brick plinth was awaited.
4. EDF/HPC Community Impact Mitigation Fund (CIM Bid) - Diversity Voice - **Resolved:** That the Town Council confirm their support for the bid, in which CAB Sedgemoor are leading with partners West Somerset Advice and Diversity Voice.
5. Grant Applications 2016/17- **Resolved:** That the applications from:
 1. Blake Museum on behalf of Bridgwater History Day Project (£350);
 2. Somerset Businesses against Crime - completion of reprogramming of handsets following upgrade of system and provision of link radio for BTC office (£2,500) be **approved**; and
 3. In principle requests for a contribution towards memorial (blue plaque) at Wembdon Road Cemetery to the late Dr Peter Cattermole (£400) and Community Music Project at Trinity Hall by Somerset Rural Youth Project (originally planned for Bridgwater Library) - 30 sessions (£517.50) be **agreed** subject to submission of formal applications;

6. Ward Grant Application 2016/17 - **Resolved:** That the application Victoria Ward - Ups and Downs Charity - in the sum of £200 to kick start project be **approved**.

For information:

Items 1 - 20 as circulated, together with 21. HPC Community Forum report of 13/10/16; 22. Northgate Car Parks - parking provision changes from 07/11/16 in light of Wessex Water Authority works in Northgate car park.

The meeting finished at 9.40 pm

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Signed Chairman